

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUJUMB 00936 291456Z

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CPR-01 NSC-05 PA-01 SS-15

USIA-06 PRS-01 /050 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5705

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0936

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PPDC, BY, US

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE FOR NOVEMBER 28
CEREMONIES IN BURUNDI

1. ON NOVEMBER 28, BURUNDI WILL CELEBRATE THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUP WHICH BROUGHT AN END TO THE MONARCHY, AND WHICH INSTALLED MICOMBERO AS THE COUNTRY'S FIRST AND, SO FAR, ONLY PRESIDENT. GALA EVENTS ARE PLANNED, AND SOME OTHER AFRICAN CHEIFS OF STATE, INCLUDING REPORTEDLY MOBUTU, WILL ATTEND.

2. THE UNITED STATES HAS HERETOFORE NEVER TAKEN OFFICIAL NOTICE OF NOVEMBER 28, AND HAS RESERVED PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES FOR THE ANNUAL OBSERVATION OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE ON JULY ONE. IN ANY EVENT, THERE IS NO REASON TO ESTABLISH A PRECEDENT FOR A SECOND MESSAGE PER YEAR. HOWEVER, THIS PARTICULAR YEAR IS SUCH A SPECIAL EVENT THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN ABOUT A POSSIBLE EXCEPTION JUST THIS ONCE. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAS ALREADY SOUNDED ME OUT ON U.S. INTENTIONS, AND INFO POSTS MIGHT BE ABLE TO ASCERTAIN THE THOUGHTS OF THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS ON THIS QUESTION. (MOSCOW, INCIDENTALLY, IS SUPPOSED TO BE AS YET UNDECIDED.)

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PAGE 02 BUJUMB 00936 291456Z

3. THE MAIN ARGUMENT AGAINST ANY MESSAGE IS THAT IT WOULD CELEBRATE THE TAKEOVER BY A REGIME THAT HAS NOT, TO SAY THE LEAST, DISTINGUISHED ITSELF ON HUMAN RIGHTS, NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, NATION BUILDING, OR SENSIBLE FOREIGN POLICY STANDS. ALSO, WE WOULD NOT WANT TO SEEM TO BE ENDORSING ANY ONE MAN'S PARTICULAR REGIME.

4. NEVERTHELESS, THE ACCEPTABLE PART OF THE OCCASION IS THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC. I SHOULD THINK THAT A MESSAGE, NOT COMPROMISING TRUE U.S. FEELINGS, COULD BE DEvised WHICH WOULD SEIZE ON THAT ASPECT OF THE CEREMONIES AND USE LANGUAGE SIMILAR TO THAT OF ULY ONE GREETINGS. STRESS ON THE TEN YEARS ANNIVERSARY ELEMENT WOULD AVOID THE PROBLEM OF A NOVEMBER 28 PRECENT IN FUTURE YEARS.

5. UNDOUBTEDLY, THE DEPARTMENT HAS HAD SIMILAR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES WITH THIS SORT OF PROTOCOLARY PROBLEM. WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR REACTION OF ANY OF ADDRESSEES.
MARK

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